

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS****Rejections of the Claims**

Claims 1, 9 and 17 are canceled herein thereby rendering the Examiner's previous rejections moot.

**Objections of the Claims / Allowable Subject Matter**

The Examiner rejected claims 2-8, 10-16 and 18-24 as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but indicated these claims to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Applicant has amended the claims in accordance with the Examiner's designation. Claim 2 as amended now includes the limitations of canceled claim 1. Claims 3-8, which depend on claim 2, are amended to correct minor matters of form. Claim 10 is amended to include the limitations of claim 9 (canceled) and claims 11-16, which depend on claim 10, are amended to correct minor matters of form. Claim 18 as amended now include the limitations of canceled claim 17. Claims 19-24, which depend on claim 18, were also amended for purposes of correcting minor matters of form.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2, 10, and 18 were amended as requested by the Examiner to hasten allowance of the present case. However, given the scope and nature of the prior art cited Applicant explicitly disclaims any admission of

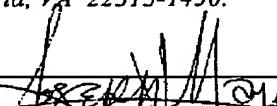
estoppel associated with these amendments and reserves the right to seek claims of different scope and/or type in a continuation or further patent application.

## CONCLUSION

For at least the reasons stated herein, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner differs in this conclusion, the Examiner is hereby requested to contact Applicant's representative for purposes of a telephone interview at the number listed below before any action (other than an allowance) is initiated.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph J. Mayo Reg. No. 53,288  
of THE DALINA LAW GROUP, P.C.  
P. (866) 221-6364  
F. (858) 777-5425

Correspondence Info:	<b>CERTIFICATE OF MAILING or TRANSMISSION</b>
Customer Number <b>36067</b>	<i>I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on August 20, 2004 to (703) 872-9306 or is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.</i>
	Signature:  Date: August 20, 2004 Name: Joseph J. Mayo